

Media consolidation is a serious issue, as the media operates as a third leg providing stability to our fragile democracy by connecting and balancing political power, which tends to conglomerate with wealth, and the power of the public, which requires access to diverse sources of information and ideas.

The most recent example of the problem with media consolidation is Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election. As you know, Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge. This in turn obligates Sinclair and all users of the public's airwaves to serve the public interest.

When large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for shareholders and less of what we need for our democracy.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Evidence of how the public interest was served and of how equal access to the airwaves was provided for diverse opinions and viewpoints is necessary to support license renewal. Thank you.